Introduction to Ethics (Phil 2306, hybrid) Spring 2019

Department of Political Science and Philosophy

John Glassford, Professor of Philosophy

Office: RAS 217
Email: john.glassford@angelo.edu
Office Phone: (325)942-2262
Office Hours: MWR, 1 pm -2 pm
Class Times and Rooms: 3:15-4 pm, every alternate Monday, Rassman 239


This text is absolutely necessary and students should purchase a copy before semester begins. Buying the text after week 2 or 3 will leave you insufficiently prepared for the course and unprepared for the first test.

Course Description
Sometimes called MORAL PHILOSOPHY Ethics serves to introduce students to ethical dilemmas and how philosophy approaches these. This is the branch of philosophy that questions what is good and bad, and why certain actions are right or wrong. In this class we will deal with questions such as: What is ethics? Are there universal moral principles? Should/can all human beings have the same moral values? How do we know what is good? Where do moral values come from; reason? Emotion? Or perhaps morality is produced by culture and convention, or from social acculturation? Is an action good or bad in itself? Does it depend on our intentions? What is the relation between ethics and religion? Can we have one without the other?

In the first half of the course you will gain conceptual tools, and learn something of the ethical systems of the Western philosophical tradition, such as moral relativism, utilitarianism, Kantian ethics, virtue ethics and the feminist ethics of care. In the second half of the course you will apply your knowledge of ethical theories and systems to analyze and evaluate topical controversial issues such as euthanasia, abortion, economic justice, environmental responsibility, cloning, animal rights, violence and war.

The Class
This class is a HYBRID class which means that 75% of the teaching is online and in the textbook. We will only meet for one hour on alternate Mondays.
Class Attendance Policy
It is strongly recommended that all students try to attend the eight classes of the semester.

Class Prohibitions (*unless I am presented with an accommodation)
NO SLEEPING (if you are too tired to stay awake in class you should not be there)
NO PHONES
NO EARBUDS
NO DIPPING
NO VAPING
*NO LAPTOPS
NO HOT FOOD
PLEASE DON’T PASS MESSAGES
DO NOT LEAVE CLASS AFTER SIGNING IN WITHOUT PERMISSION
DO NOT ENGAGE IN DISTRACTING BEHAVIOUR

Class Preparation
Always bring your textbook to class Bring notebook or note paper and pencil/pen Always complete the reading assignments before class Be prepared to listen and answer questions

Multiple Choice Tests
You will take THREE multiple choice tests. These tests will be on the subject matter of the previous three or four weeks of class, these are not cumulative. Each test is usually 30 multiple choice and true/false questions, and you will have 30 mins to take the test. These tests are NOT open book. Tests will take place in the classroom with a scantron answer key.

*Final In-class Blue Book Exam The final class exam is open book. A detailed rubric of how these papers are assessed is posted on Blackboard. You will be expected to write an answer of about 1000-1200 words (roughly four or five sides of the Blue Book). You will be given an exam paper with several optional questions based upon the last weeks of the course. In my experience the main reason why students here at ASU under-perform with regard to finals is that they do not engage with course material. Papers often tend towards ‘stream of consciousness’ with few references to what has been studied. It is expected in a philosophy class, even an intro class, that you have learned some of the philosophers names and can accurately point to what ideas are associated with these philosophers and how to deploy these ideas in a coherent fashion. Higher grades will be awarded to those who can do some of this.

* All course work must be completed for a final grade.
The Angelo State University Honor Code
Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which is contained in both print and web versions of the Student Handbook. In other words, when you submit your work, you claim that the work is yours. If someone else wrote it for you or you got it from someone else (internet, other student’s class...), then you are not the author and thus will get a zero for that assignment. Any idea that is not yours should be properly referenced.

Disabilities Please let me know if you have any special need due to any learning disability. Persons with disabilities which may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office.

ASU Mission Statement
Angelo State University, a member of the Texas Tech University System, delivers undergraduate and graduate programs in the liberal arts, sciences, and professional disciplines. In a learning-centered environment distinguished by its integration of teaching, research, creative endeavor, service, and co-curricular experiences, ASU prepares students to be responsible citizens and to have productive careers.

Grading Scale
A-90% Outstanding
B-80 Very good
C-70 Satisfactory
D-60 Min required
F- Fail

The Course (I reserve the right to change the course from time to time when necessary)

PART 1 Systems of Ethics

Weeks 1 & 2 Class Discussions: Ethical Relativism & Egoism
Reading Assignments: pps. 20-32, and pps. 33-51

Weeks 3 & 4 Class Discussions: Utilitarianism and Kant’s Moral Theory
Reading Assignments: pps. 52-73 and pps. 74-95

First Multiple Choice Quiz
Weeks 5 & 6 Class Discussions: Aristotle’s Virtue Ethics, Feminist Ethics, Ethics of Existentialism and Psychoanalysis.

Reading Assignments: pps. 124-143, and pps. 144-161 & PDFs

PART 2 Ethical Issues

Weeks 7 & 8 Class Discussions: Euthanasia and Abortion

Reading Assignments: pps. 162-194, and pps. 196-228

Second Multiple Choice Quiz

Weeks 9 & 10 Class Discussions: Sexual Morality and Economic Justice

Reading Assignments: pps. 230-252, and pps. 279-310

Weeks 11 & 12 Class Discussions: The Death Penalty and the Environment

Reading Assignments: pps. 312-338, and pps. 340-373

Third Multiple Choice Quiz

Weeks 13 & 14 Class Discussions: Animal Rights and Cloning

Reading Assignments: pps. 375-400, and pps. 402-431

Week 15 Class Discussions: Just War Theory

Reading Assignments: pps. 433-457

FINAL In-Class Blue Book Exam Wednesday, Dec 11, 3:15-5:30